

Amendments to the Claims

Please cancel Claims 23, 31, 33, 35, 37, and 42. Please amend Claims 22, 24, 26, 28-30, 36, 38 and 41. The Claim Listing below will replace all prior versions of the claims in the application:

Claim Listing

1-21 (Cancelled)

22. (Currently Amended) A process for the production of a protein comprising the steps of:

- a) culturing a *Zygosaccharomyces bailii* strain, said strain transformed with a vector comprising a DNA sequence coding for a protein functionally linked to a signaling sequence selected from the group consisting of the signaling pre-sequence of the α -subunit of the K1 killer toxin of *Kluyveromyces lactis* and the signal sequence of the pre-pro α -factor of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, and further functionally linked to a promoter,
- b) expressing and secreting a protein,
- c) isolating the protein.

23. (Cancelled)

24. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim ~~[[23]]~~ 22, wherein the vector is an extra-chromosomal plasmid.

25. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 24, wherein the plasmid is derived from an endogenous episomal plasmid from a *Z. bailii* strain.

26. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim ~~[[23]]~~ 22, wherein the ~~plasmid~~ vector comprises sequences for replication, stabilization, or plasmid copy number control, obtainable from *Z. bailii*.

27. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 25, wherein the plasmid comprises at least 35 bases of one of the sequences selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID No.: 63, SEQ ID No.: 64, SEQ ID No.: 65, SEQ ID No.: 66, SEQ ID No.: 67, SEQ ID No.: 68, SEQ ID No.: 69, SEQ ID No.: 70, and SEQ ID No.: 71.
28. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim ~~[[23]]~~ 22, wherein the promoter is a triose-phosphate isomerase promoter, obtainable from *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* or from *Z. bailii*.
29. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim ~~[[23]]~~ 22, wherein the promoter is a glyceraldehyde phosphate dehydrogenase promoter, obtainable from *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, *Z. bailii* or *Z. rouxii*.
30. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim ~~[[23]]~~ 22, wherein the signal sequence is a continuous stretch of 15 to 60 amino acids, comprising one or more positively charged amino acid(s) followed by a stretch of about 5 to 10 hydrophobic amino acids, which are optionally interrupted by non-hydrophobic residues.
31. (Cancelled)
32. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 22, wherein the *Z. bailii* strain is transformed with a vector comprising the DNA sequence coding for the protein, functionally linked to the signalling pre-sequence of the alpha-subunit of the K1 killer toxin of *Kluyveromyces lactis* and further functionally linked to the triose-phosphate isomerase promoter from *S. cerevisiae*.
33. (Cancelled)

34. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 22, wherein the *Z. bailii* strain is transformed with a vector comprising the DNA sequence coding for the protein, functionally linked to the signal sequence of the pre-pro α -factor of *S. cerevisiae* and further functionally linked to the triose-phosphate isomerase promoter from *S. cerevisiae*.
35. (Cancelled)
36. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim [[23]] 22, wherein the DNA sequence coding for the protein is derived from animal, bacterial, fungal, plant, or viral sources.
37. (Cancelled)
38. (Currently Amended) ~~The process of Claim 22,~~ A process for the production of a protein comprising the steps of:
a) culturing a *Zygosaccharomyces bailii* strain,
b) expressing and secreting a protein,
c) isolating the protein,
wherein the *Z. bailii* strain has been subjected to a selection process for improved secretion.
39. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 22, wherein the *Z. bailii* strain is cultivated in a chemically defined medium.
40. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 22, wherein the protein is isolated from the culture medium.
41. (Currently Amended) A *Z. bailii* strain, expressing and secreting a heterologous protein, wherein said strain is transformed with a vector comprising a DNA sequence coding for a protein functionally linked to a signaling sequence selected from the group consisting of the signaling pre-sequence of the α -subunit of the K1 killer toxin of *Kluyveromyces lactis*

and the signal sequence of the pre-pro α -factor of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, and further functionally linked to a promoter.

42. (Cancelled)